

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MONROVIA 1662

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: RH, NG, SF, LI, OVIP (CARTER, JIMMY)
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT TOLBERT'S VIEWS ON THE NEGOTIATIONS IN
SALISBURY

E. REGINALD TOWNSEND, MINISTER OF STATE FOR PRESIDENTIAL
AFFAIRS, PASSED TO THE AMBASSADOR A COPY OF REMARKS MADE BY
PRESIDENT TOLBERT MARCH 7 WHEN RECEIVING THE CREDENTIALS OF THE
AMBASSADOR OF NIGER DEFINING THE GOL POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE
NEGOTIATIONS BEING UNDERTAKEN IN SALISBURY BETWEEN SMITH AND THE
THREE NATIONALIST LEADERS. TOWNSEND ALSO SUGGESTED PASSING
THESE VIEWS TO THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF FOR THE PRESIDENT'S UPCOMING
VISIT. THESE REMARKS, REPEATED IN FULL BELOW, SHOW THAT THE
GOL POSITION REMAINS CLOSELY ALIGNED TO OUR OWN:

"IN ZIMBABWE, EVENTS ARE RAPIDLY UNFOLDING, THE IMPLICATIONS OF
WHICH REQUIRE CAREFUL ASSESSMENT BY AFRICA. IN ORDER TO PLACE
THESE DEVELOPMENTS IN THEIR PROPER PERSPECTIVE, I SHOULD LIKE TO
REFER TO OAU SUMMIT MEETING HELD AT LIBERVILLE IN JULY LAST WHERE
AFRICA PLEDGED ITS SUPPORT FOR AN INTENSIFICATION OF THE ZIMBABWE
ARMED STRUGGLE. RECOGNIZING THE IMPORTANT ROLE OF THE FIGHTING
CADRES FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE ARMED STRUGGLE, THE LIBERVILLE SUMMIT
URGED THAT FULL MATERIAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BE PROVIDED TO
THE PATRIOTIC FRONT. ALTHOUGH THE LIBERVILLE SUMMIT CLEARLY
RECOGNIZED THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AS THE MACHINERY THROUGH WHICH THE
ARMED STRUGGLE WOULD BE WAGED, AS WE UNDERSTOOD THAT RESOLUTION,
IT IN NO WAY PRECLUDED THE SEARCH FOR A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT WHICH
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THE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND/OR OTHER ZIMBABWEAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS
COULD PURSUE. HAD THIS NOT BEEN THE INTENT OF THE LIBERVILLE
SUMMIT, IT WOULD NOT HAVE SOLICITED INCREASED FINANCIAL, MATERIAL
AND POLITICAL ASSISTANCE TO THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE TO ENABLE THEM
TO RETRIEVE THEIR REGHTS FOR SELF-DETERMINATION AND INDEPENDENCE.
OBVIOUSLY, ALL OF THE PEOPLE OF ZIMBABWE ARE NOT EMBODIED IN THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT, AND MOST REGRETTABLY IT IS A WELL KNOWN FACT THAT

THE ZIMBABWE LIBERATION STRUGGLE HAS BEEN AND STILL IS
CHARACTERIZED BY DIVISIVENESS AND DISUNITY.

AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND, WE IN LIBERIA HAVE FOLLOWED VERY KEENLY,
RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN SALISBURY WHERE SOME ZIMBABWE NATIONALIST
LEADERS ARE HOLDING TALKS WITH THE REBEL IAN SMITH. OF COURSE,
THE PHENOMENON OF TALKS ON ZIMBABWE IS NOTHING NEW, FOR AT VARIOUS
STAGES OF THE LIBERATION STRUGGLE, NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEEN
CONDUCTED IN SOME INSTANCES BETWEEN IAN SMITH AND NATIONALIST
LEADERS; AND ON OTHER OCCASIONS, BETWEEN SMITH AND THE BRITISH.

AS A MATTER OF POLICY, WE IN LIBERIA HAVE ALWAYS MAINTAINED THAT
THE STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM MUST BE FOUGHT ON ALL FRONTS IN SOUTHERN
AFRICA, PARTICULARLY IN ZIMBABWE. WE MUST INTENSIFY THE ARMED
STRUGGLE AND SIMULTANEOUSLY PURSUE DIPLOMATIC AND POLITICAL
INITIATIVES. THUS, WHILE WE LEND FULL SUPPORT TO THE PATRIOTIC
FRONT, WE MUST NOT CLOSE THE DOORS TO NEGOTIATIONS. WE
ACCORDINGLY WELCOME THE IDEA OF INTERNAL TALKS WITH THE SMITH
REGIME, WHERE THEY WOULD LEAD TO A JUST SOLUTION OF THE RHODESIAN
PROBLEM. BUT WE WOULD INSIST THAT ALL PARTIES TO THE STRUGGLE
PARTICIPATE THEREIN SO AS TO ENSURE THE MAXIMUM POSSIBLE SUPPORT
FOR ANY RESULTS WHICH MAY EMERGE, AND THEREBY AVOID CIVIL STRIFE.

IN THIS CONNECTION, I HAVE COME TO UNDERSTAND THAT THE RECENT
MEETING OF THE OAU COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AT TRIPOLI, LIBYA,
CONDEMNED THE INTERNAL TALKS THAT ARE BEING HELD IN SALISBURY
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AFTER HAVING DENIED SOME OF THOSE PARTICIPATING IN THE TALKS
PERMISSION TO INFORM THE COUNCIL OF THE SUBSTANCE OF THE TALKS.

LET ME HERE STATE UNEQUIVOCALLY THAT LIBERIA DID NOT THEN NOR WILL
WE LEND HER SUPPORT TO ANY DECISION WHICH CONDEMNS THE PRINCIPLE
OF NEGOTIATION. NEITHER WILL SHE JOIN IN CONDEMNING THE SUBSTANCE
OF THESE NEGOTIATIONS WITHOUT FIRST HAVING A FULL KNOWLEDGE OF
SAME, OR AFFORDING THE NATIONALIST PARTICIPANTS AN OPPORTUNITY
TO GIVE TIMELY INFORMATION THEREON; FOR ONLY THEREBY WOULD WE
BE BETTER QUALIFIED TO MAKE AN ADEQUATE ASSESSMENT OF THE
INITIATIVES WHICH COULD POSSIBLY CONTRIBUTE SOME ASSISTANCE IN
THE ACHIEVEMENT OF INDEPENDENCE WITH MAJORITY RULE FOR ZIMBABWE --
THE DESIRED OBJECTIVE OF ALL AFRICANS.

AFTER MORE THAN 12 YEARS OF PERSEVERANCE, IT APPEARS THAT WE HAVE
EMBARKED UPON THE FINAL PHASE OF THE ZIMBABWE LIBERATION STRUGGLE.
WE THEREFORE RENEW OUR APPEAL TO ALL THE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS OF
ZIMBABWE TO EXERT EVERY EFFORT TO FORGE A STRONG BOND OF UNITY
SO AS TO MAXIMIZE THE OPPORTUNITIES FOR A SETTLEMENT OF
THIS LINGERING AND DIFFICULT PROBLEM.

IN THE MIDST OF THE COMPLEXITIES WHICH BECLOUD THE ZIMBABWE

STRUGGLE, FREE AFRICA MUST DEMONSTRATE THE WISDOM, FORESIGHT, FLIXIBILITY AND SOLIDARITY SO ESSENTIAL FOR THE EVOLUTION OF AN INDEPENDENT AND UNIFIED ZIMBABWE. AND THE GREAT POWERS, YEA THE WHOLE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY, SHOULD EVER REMAIN SENSITIVE TO AND CONSCIOUS OF THEIR OBLIGATION AND RESPONSIBILITY TO PRODUCE A WHOLESOME FUNCTIONING SOCIETY IN THIS PART OF OUR ONE WORLD, AND NOT IN ANY MANNER CONTRIBUTE TO CONFLICTS AND INSECURITY THEREIN.

IT IS THEREFORE GRATIFYING TO NOTE THAT YOUR GREAT COUNTRY

CONTINUES WHOLEHEARTEDLY TO SUPPORT THE HERCULEAN STRUGGLE TO LIBERATE THE AFRICAN CONTINENT FROM THE REMAINING VESTIGES OF SUPPRESSION, OPPRESSION AND RACISM. OURS IS A NOBLE STRUGGLE AND CONFIDENTIAL

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WE REMAIN CONFIDENT THAT, BY THE GRACE OF GOD, A NEW DAY WILL SOON DAWN FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS IN SOUTHERN AFRICA."
CARTER

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